304 Circumcision. -- Boys are circumcised at the age of three or
852 four, usually by a marabout. Circumcision (amoud, amilli, or
azemmoued) is not the occasion for any festivity and is practiced
[412 collectively. The contusing instrument used is a little knife with
302] an iron blade, used by the men as a razor. During the healing
period the child rests in his parents' camp and is cared for by them.

[171] Little girls are not excised as they are among the Moors of Tagant and Hodh.

291 Children go around naked until they are five or six years old,
855 depending on the wealth or the foresight of their parents. Little
[556] girls wear a loincloth at the age of six or seven, while boys wear trousers of the same style as the men.

861 Education. -- Children's education begins after weaning. From that time on the boy passes under the control of his father, while the girl stays in her mother's hands. This education is hardly complicated for either the boy or girl.

868 The little boy, from the age of five, takes care of watching
857 the goats and sheep by himself. Later he is entrusted with the camels,
[462] which he leads to pasture and to drink. He is also taught how to milk goats, for among the Tuareg, men, as a rule, take charge of this job. Toward the age of seven he begins to ride camels. Then fights with sabers or lances are organized in the form of games between children of the same age, arms being replaced by millet stems or tree branches. This is not a part of education properly speaking, since it is done by the children themselves.

868 Religious education is rather neglected among the Ahaggar
869 Tuareg where marabouts are scarce. When there is a marabout in a camp, he teaches children and young people the rudiments of the
[212] Koran, which they learn by heart by singing it all day long, for they are ignorant of Arabic writing.

● 881 /287/ The litham /veil/ is put on the boy at fifteen or sixteen
[145] when the hair begins to appear in his armpits. It is put on by the
291 father, most often at the time of Ramadan. There is no additional
[131] ceremony for the occasion. The father gives his son some good advice, and young women and girls give him tobacco as a gift.

882 From this day on the boy enters into the class of men. He
884 may go to war and attend the ahal.

868 Education of girls is hardly more interesting. At six or seven, the little girl begins to see to household duties, participating in cleaning the tent and making meals, etc. A little later she learns to weave mats, work little copper articles, and spin goat hair.

534 Musical and literary education for young girls is very much esteemed among the Tuareg and 212 most particularly among the Imochar. Little girls learn to write tifinagh letters and play the amzad, a sort of small one-stringed violin which brightens up the dull evenings of the Tuareg.

Fig. 53. Amzad, or one-stringed violin of Ahaggar Tuareg women, and its bow.

534 The amzad is made
237 of half a hollowed-out and dried gourd, over which a goatskin or uran /lizard/ skin has been stretched, attached by cords (in the Ahaggar) or little acacia thorns (in the Aïr). The skin is pierced by one or two holes to increase the resonance. The handle is made of a stick which penetrates into one side of the gourd through a hole and is secured at the other side by a point, or else it may go through that side too. The string is formed of several pieces of horsehair separated from the skin by a little bridge made of two small pieces of wood tied together crosswise. The bow (taganhé) forms an arc with

As to the girl, a celebration is held as soon as she reaches the age of puberty, that is to say, at the start of her menses, in Tamashek /6/ "ba-n-amoud" ⵎⵓⵏⴰⵎⵓⴷ (literally, "cutting of prayer," since during her indisposition the woman is in a state of impurity and cannot pray). The young girl is dressed in her prettiest clothes, and on her head is placed a black veil, "ikerhi" ⵉⴽⴻⵔⵀⵉ, which falls on either side of her face without hiding it. She also never leaves it off.

If her parents are well-to-do, she will learn to play the amz'ad ⴰⵎⵣⵣⴰⴷ, an instrument which has an important place in Tuareg life. It is a kind of violin with a single string whose box is made of a large "kabouia," or a dried and scooped-out gourd, covered with a stretched hide and pierced with two holes, which is provided with a handle. The string is made of horsehair, "az'iou" ⴰⵣⵣⵉⵓ, as are the strings of the bow, "tadjelhé" ⵜⴰⴷⵊⴻⵍⵀⴻ, made of a stick bent into an arc.

It is chiefly an instrument to accompany singing. The woman slides her fingers over the string without pressing, while working the bow; she prolongs the final phrases, which are drawn out.

If a young girl knows how to play, she may shine at the musical gatherings, where she will be courted.

Chapter IV

Musical Gatherings

A young man and a young girl often go to meet together, and this occurs especially in those gatherings which, to be accurate, we will if you permit call "musical gatherings," and which the Tuareg call "ahal" ⵜⴰⵀⴰⵍ, plural "ihallen" ⵉⵀⴰⵍⵍⴻⵏ.

868 /139 cont./ horses; no one may touch her ribs." As a matter
[211] of fact, many of the letters are not found in this phrase, but it is a good enough reminder.

Among the imrads the young boy, from the age of ten, accompanies his father to the Sudan or to the Amadror saltworks. In this way, little by little, he acquires knowledge of the trail. The noble remains at camp longer; by listening to the discussions of his elders he becomes acquainted with the art of command.

884 Gradually, the young Targui begins to wear the veil, at first using an old chèche /scarf/, which he tries to arrange in the proper fashion. At the age of fifteen he will put on the taguelmoust /blue veil/ for good during a celebration; he
[431] will take part in an ilougan /tournament/ mounted on his own camel, the gift of his godfather, or on a borrowed animal.

On this occasion he receives gifts, a takouba /sword/, a taguelmoust, or a takamist /a kind of gandurah worn on festive occasions/. He is now a young man. The girl officially takes
● [881] her alechou /shawl/ at the time of puberty; she also receives gifts: the alechou, clothes. She is made much of. Now she is considered to be a woman. Until now she did not speak before the men, maintaining a shy attitude; now there is an end to that, everyone obliges her to talk and to conduct herself as a lady of the house.

Boys and girls who have assumed the taguelmoust and the alechou may thenceforth attend meetings of the adults, but they do not speak except when asked a question.

The occupations of the young people are practically the same as those of the adults. The girls help with cleaning the tent, mend clothes, and make leather bags; among the imrads, they milk the cows.

/140/ The young man begins to travel alone and tends the camels. If he still amuses himself by fighting with his friends, he no longer fences with the takouba, a practice in former times.

7:Nicolaisen E-5 (1951-1962) 1963 MS25 Tuareg M525

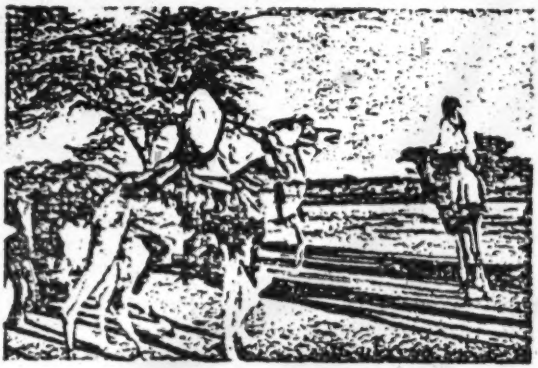

Fig. 82a. Tuareg performing the ceremonial camel-ride on the first wedding day. The women stand in the shade of the *ofagay* acacia and sing and drum while the men ride around them two by two. Southern Ayr, *Iyawiken*.

Boys and girls may play together, but there is a tendency for them to separate in their games. Boy-games centre round camels, while the games of girls centre round the family life of the tent and certain domestic tasks. But though camels are never tended by women, girls also make camel figures from cotton stuffed with hay, though they do not make figures to represent goats and donkeys which among vassals are connected with women and tended by them. The emphasis on camels in girl's games is due to the fact that camels have important functions in social life as described briefly below.

Tuareg initiation consists in the adoption of the veil by young men, and a similar piece of cotton used as a head-cloth by young women. The veil is adopted by men when 16–18 years old, the head-cloth by women somewhat earlier shortly after the first menstruation, or at marriage. At initiation the young man is presented with a sword, and if he does not already possess a riding camel with a saddle it will be given him on this occasion by his father, perhaps by his mother's brother. The young man is now a warrior and a camel man, and he will take part in nightly gatherings of young people of both sexes to sing and make music. These nightly gatherings are very often followed by love-making, and the riding camel and the ability of the young man as a rider play a great part for his success in love. The beauty of the riding camel, its saddle gear, and the way it is ridden are all to some extent considered qualities of the rider. Thus when women at nightly gatherings praise young men in their songs they will also praise the riding camels. And when a girl likes a young man she will present him with coloured skin bags, reins, embroidered saddle clothes, and similar objects to be used as ornaments for his riding camel.

In a ceremonial ride termed *shaton* (*shagan* in Ayr), which is performed at weddings and certain other feasts, the young men have a particular opportunity to display the beauty of their camels and their own ability as riders. The ride takes place not far from the wedding tent on a level sandy place where the women gather to sing and drum, while the men dressed in their finest clothes ride their ornamented camels to and fro past the women, who praise the beautiful camels and the skilled riders by their songs, their music, and by shrill cheers. In this ceremonial ride the emphasis is not so much on such